

Ascension Parish



"Over the years, it has become clear that individual health is closely linked to community health—the health of the community and environment in which individuals live, work, and play. Likewise, community health is profoundly affected by the collective beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors of everyone who lives in the community"

Healthy People 2010

Parish Health Profiles 2005 — Your Parish at a Glance

	Ascension	Louisiana	U.S.	HP 2010
ECONOMICS, 2000				
% All persons in poverty	12.9%	19.6%	12.4%	--
% Children under 18 in poverty	16.5%	26.6%	16.6%	--
% Unemployed 16 and over	5.4%	7.3%	5.8%	--
EDUCATION 2002-2003				
School Expenditure per Student	\$6,919	\$6,906	--	--
Student Attendance (average daily attendance as a % of the average number of students enrolled)	94.1%	93.5%	--	--
% High School Drop Outs (as a % of incoming 9th grade)	6.5%	7.0%	--	--
MOTHERS AND CHILDREN, 2002				
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 births)	6.7	10.2	7.0	4.5
% Receiving prenatal care within first 3 months	86.2%	83.8%	83.7%	90.0%
% Receiving adequate prenatal care (modified Kessner)	83.5%	78.9%	76.2%	--
% Low birth weight	8.9%	10.5%	7.7%	5.0%
% Births to teens ages 15 - 19	10.3%	15.5%	10.6%	--
% Children fully immunized by 2 years old	--	69.8%	78.5%	90.0%
INFECTIOUS DISEASES, 2003 (new cases - rate per 100,000 population)				
Syphilis (primary and secondary)	--	4.1	2.5	0.2
Early Syphilis (primary, secondary and early latent)	NA	8.6	5.4	--
Chlamydia	207.5	469.8	304.3	3.0
Gonorrhea	109.6	265.6	116.2	19.0
Tuberculosis	2.7*	5.8	5.1	1.0
STATEWIDE LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH, 2002 (death rate per 100,000 population)				
Heart	207.3	248.4	241.7	166.0
Cancer	169.4	209.7	193.2	159.9
Cerebrovascular Disease	39.2	57.4	56.4	48.0
Accidents	46.8	46.7	37.0	17.5
Diabetes	**	39.5	25.4	45.0
Chronic Lower Respiratory	**	37.8	43.3	--
COMMUNITY SAFETY, 2003				
Validated cases of child abuse/neglect (rate per 1,000 population)	4.6	10.9	12.4	10.3
Deaths caused by motor vehicle crashes (rate per 100 Million Vehicle Miles Traveled)	2.1	2.1	1.5	0.8
HEALTH BEHAVIORS, 2004				
	Region 2	Louisiana	U.S.	HP 2010
% Current cigarette smokers (adults 18+)	20.9%	23.5%	21.0%	12.0%
% Obese - BMI > 30 (adults 20+)	23.4%	27.0%	31.1%	15.0%
% Having a mammogram within 2 years (women 40+)	81.0%	74.3%	74.6%	70.0%
% Having a pap smear within 3 years (women 18+)	88.6%	85.2%	85.9%	90.0%
% Having a flu shot in past year (adults 65+)	74.7%	68.6%	67.9%	90.0%

Data Sources:

Economics: U.S. Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3) - Sample Data, 2000

Education: Louisiana Department of Education District-reported data submitted to the Student Information System (SIS) end-of-year (EOY) report and Profile of Educational Personnel (PEP) System. Office of Management and Finance, Division of Planning, Analysis and Information Resources. District Composite Report 2003-2004.

Mothers and Children: DHH/OPH, Louisiana State Center for Health Statistics, 2004 Louisiana Health Report Card and National Vital Statistics Reports, Vol. 53, No. 15, February 2005

Infectious Diseases: DHH/OPH, Sexually Transmitted Disease Program. 2004 and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Trends in Reportable Sexually Transmitted Disease in the United State, 2003". NA= Rate not available, # of cases is less than 5

Leading Causes of Death: DHH/OPH, Louisiana State Center for Health Statistics, 2004 Louisiana Health Report Card and National Vital Statistics Reports, Vol. 53, No. 15, February 2005 (**Rates for counts less than 20 are unreliable and are not reported)

Community Safety: Child Abuse--Louisiana Department of Social Services, Office of Community Services, prepared by Prevent Child Abuse Louisiana and Motor Vehicle Deaths--EM S/Injury Research & Prevention Program

Healthy Behaviors: DHH/OPH, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2004

History^{1 2}

Ascension is one of the original 12 “counties of Louisiana” and one of the original 16 parishes. Although listed in 1805 as “Acadia,” the real meaning was “Acadia Coast.” On March 31, 1807, it was given its present name. The parish was settled first by the Acadians who came to Louisiana between 1764 and 1772. The historic Catholic Church in Donaldsonville contains the oldest church records in the state, dating from 1772.



Ascension Parish, located in the heart of Plantation Country, mixes Old South traditions with exciting new offerings. The quaint towns are surrounded by sprawling sugar cane fields and beautiful cypress swamplands. Visit Gonzales during the Jambalaya Festival and sample their famous jambalaya, a delicious mixture of rice and cooked meats. Other parish celebrations include the Galvez-Lake Firemen’s Fair, Louisiana Chili Cookoff, the Boucherie, Strawberry and Sunshine Festivals. Unique restaurants, lodgings, antique shops, and Tanger Factory Outlet Center are also located here. Tour an Acadian village in Sorrento, then discover the antebellum plantations. Houmas House, Tezcuco with its African-American museum, and Ashland/Belle Helene, Bocage, and l’Hermitage each depict gracious southern living. Historic Donaldsonville served as state capital from 1830-31.

Parish Seat³ Donaldsonville

Major Cities (population over 5,000)

- Donaldsonville
- Gonzales

Parish Population⁴

2000.....	76,627
2003 (estimate)	84,424
2000 Population by Race	
White.....	77.4%
African-American	20.3%
Some other race.....	2.3%
Hispanic of Latino (of any race)	2.5%
2000 Population by Age	
Under 5 years	8.2%
5-14	16.8%
15-17	5.1%
18-19	3.0%
20-24	6.5%
25-64	52.7%
65 & over	7.7%

Geography and Statistics⁵

Average elevation	10.5ft.
Land area in square miles	292
Water area in square miles	11.4

Climate

Average temperatures	
Annual	68°
January	61°
July	91°
Annual average rainfall	60.3 inches

Labor Force (2001)⁶

Ascension Parish	
Civilian.....	39,159
Employed	36,226
Unemployed.....	2,933
Unemployment.....	7.5%
Louisiana	
Civilian.....	2,055,000
Employed	1,956,500
Unemployed.....	98,500
Unemployment Rate	4.8%

Colleges/Universities (within one hour commute)

N/A

1. [Louisiana Almanac](#), 2002-2003 edition, Pelican Publishing Company, Gretna, LA. 2002
2. Louisiana Office of Tourism. 1998. keywords: regional information
<<http://www.crt.state.la.us/crt/tourism/>>
3. [Louisiana Almanac](#), 2002-2003 edition, Pelican Publishing Company, Gretna, LA. 2002
4. U.S. Census Bureau, Summary File 1 (SF 1) and Summary File 3 (SF 3) <<http://www.census.gov>>
5. U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts <<http://www.census.gov>>
6. Louisiana Department of Labor, Civilian Labor Force Summary
<http://www.ldol.state.la.us/forms/lmi/CLF_Parishes_2000-Present.xls>